

**CLAIMS**

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1. A method in connection with an organization having a plurality of entities, the method for acquiring a resource for at least one of the entities and comprising:

10 receiving, at a centralized agent of the organization, a request for the resource from at least one of the entities;

reviewing, by the centralized agent, each request for the resource;

selecting a vendor capable of supplying the resource of the request to the organization;

15 designating, by the centralized agent, at least one individual from the organization to work with the selected vendor in developing and supplying the resource of the request;

producing, by the centralized agent and the designated individual, a qualified request to be submitted to the selected vendor;

20 submitting the qualified request to the selected vendor;

producing an agreement with the selected vendor regarding terms by which the selected vendor agrees to supply the resource of the qualified request to the organization;

25 reviewing, by the centralized agent, the produced agreement in view of the qualified request and approving same, the selected vendor thereafter undertaking to develop and supply the resource of the qualified request according to the approved agreement; and

monitoring, by the centralized agent, progress of the selected vendor according to the produced and approved agreement.

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2. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving the request comprises receiving a statement of need that includes information necessary for the centralized agent to act upon the request.

5 3. The method of claim 1 wherein reviewing each request comprises aggregating similar requests for concurrent handling.

10 4. The method of claim 1 wherein reviewing each request comprises considering other non-requesting entities that can be expected to make a similar request.

15 5. The method of claim 1 wherein reviewing each request comprises determining whether any necessary information has not been provided by the requesting entities in the request, and if so returning the request to the requesting entity for same.

20 6. The method of claim 1 wherein reviewing each request comprises determining whether the request is invalid, and if so returning the request to the requesting entity.

25 7. The method of claim 1 wherein selecting the vendor comprises the centralized agent selecting the vendor based on at least one of a suggestion in the request, on a bidding procedure, on experience, on ability to supply the organization for the resource, and on a pre-existing relationship between the organization and the vendor.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein selecting the vendor comprises selecting a plurality of vendors.

30 9. The method of claim 1 comprising designating an individual from an entity that will be supplied with the resource of the request.

10. The method of claim 1 comprising selecting the vendor by the centralized agent and the designated individual.

5 11. The method of claim 1 wherein producing the agreement comprises the selected vendor and the designated individual working together to reach agreement regarding such terms.

10 12. The method of claim 11 wherein producing the agreement comprises the selected vendor and the designated individual defining milestones and criteria that must be satisfied in developing and supplying the resource.

15 13. The method of claim 12 wherein monitoring the selected vendor comprises performing a periodic review to determine whether each milestone and criteria is satisfied.

20 14. The method of claim 1 comprising the centralized agent reviewing the produced agreement in terms of a member of a group consisting of cost, terms, ability to satisfy needs of the organization, and combinations thereof.

15 15. The method of claim 1 comprising the designated individual consulting with the selected vendor while the selected vendor develops and supplies the resource of the request.

25 16. The method of claim 1 further comprising the centralized agent periodically re-assessing the qualified request for the resource to determine whether the qualified request is still valid in view of whether needs of the organization have changed.

17. The method of claim 1 further comprising the centralized agent reviewing performance of the selected vendor regarding feasibility of selecting the selected vendor to develop and supply other resources.

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